Waving Not Drowning: Rare Books in a Digital Age
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Abstract
Had I titled this paper a few days after I committed to the one above, I might have taken the title from a review in the Time Literary Supplement of a recent book about Joseph Kennedy, the ruthless tycoon who fathered John, Bobby, and Teddy. The first sentences of the review read: “On the golf-course one day, Joseph P. Kennedy showed his teeth to another player who waved at him across the green. ‘You know,’ he remarked to his partner, ‘that guy thinks I’m smiling.’” Sharks seem to look that way, too; which fits, in its own way, with my . . .

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At 19, Richard Mason was Britain’s most hyped young novelist, but his literary success became a ‘nightmare’. Six years on, he tells Cassandra Jardine how he has conquered his personal demons and, with a new book, is ready to face his critics again. Six years ago, Richard Mason was the focus of one of publishing’s biggest hype campaigns. At the age of 19, when his first novel, The Drowning People, was bought by Penguin, he was hailed as the new Martin Amis or F Scott Fitzgerald and tipped for the Booker Prize. Rumours about his advance (in fact, £100,000 for a two-book deal) Not Drowning, Waving (styled as not drowning, waving) were a musical group formed in Melbourne, Australia in 1983 by David Bridie and John Phillips. Their music combined elements of rock, ambient music and world music; their lyrics dealt with characteristically Australian topics: word-pictures of landscapes and people, the seasons, and some political issues – such as Indonesia’s invasion of East Timor. The group released nine albums and soundtracks until disbanding in 1994, they briefly reformed in Not Waving but Drowning. Launch Audio in a New Window. By Stevie Smith. Nobody heard him, the dead man, But still he lay moaning: I was much further out than you thought. And not waving but drowning. Poor chap, he always loved larkinglarking Playing tricks, kidding, fooling around. And now he’s dead. It must have been too cold for him his heart gave way, They said. Oh, no no no, it was too cold always. (Still the dead one lay moaning). I was much too far out all my life. And not waving but drowning.